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SUBJECT: BURMA: TALKING POINTS FOR SYG BAN'S BRIEF TO THE
UN SECURITY COUNCIL, JULY 13, 2009

REF: CHIANG MAI 94

¶1. This is an action memo. USUN may draw on the points in para 2 when making an intervention at UN Secretary-General Ban's July 13 briefing to the UN Security Council on his July 3 -4 trip to Burma.

¶2. Begin talking points:

-- The United States joins other Council members in reiterating our support for Secretary-General Ban and his Good Office mission. We appreciate his briefing. We note that he was able to convey directly to the government leadership the concerns of the United Nations and the international community about the government's continuing unwillingness to engage in a serious fashion with the UN, and to launch a genuine political dialogue with all actors in Burma.

-- While we welcome the Secretary-General meeting with Senior General Than Shwe and several members of the National League for Democracy's Central Executive Committee, we nonetheless re-iterate our serious disappointment that the Burmese authorities refused his repeated requests to meet with Aung San Suu Kyi. By refusing this simple, straightforward and appropriate request, Burmese authorities have missed yet another opportunity on behalf of their own people to engage credibly with the U.N. on the concerns that this body has repeatedly articulated.

-- First, the Burmese government has again missed an opportunity to, in the Secretary-General's words, "show its commitment to a new era of political openness." The path the authorities are pursuing will lead to neither democracy nor stability.

-- We are troubled that the Burmese authorities continue to resist addressing the grave political, economic, and human rights challenges that face the country. These problems will not be resolved through a plan imposed from the top; sustainable progress depends on the will of all Burmese citizens being heard and respected.

-- Democratic change and the institution of civilian rule can be accomplished only through a genuine dialogue on national reconciliation and a shared vision for the future with the democratic opposition and ethnic minority groups.

-- National reconciliation cannot be achieved while key leaders of Burma's democratic opposition languish in prison. We call on the Burmese government to cease its unjustified trial of Aung San Suu Kyi and free her immediately and unconditionally. National reconciliation also cannot be achieved while the Burma Army persists in violent attacks against Burma's own citizens. Recent attacks by the Burma Army and its proxies have forced more than 3,000 ethnic Karen to flee across the border into Thailand.

-- This is not only evidence of the government's

intransigence on the core issue of ending violence against ethnic minorities, but also a demonstration of the threat Burma poses to international peace and security, strongly validating the importance of keeping Burma on the Security Council's agenda.

-- The Burmese authorities insist that the vote planned for 2010 will be free and fair. But their promises have not been followed by action, and have little credibility in the eyes of the world. The burden is on the government to take concrete, tangible steps in support of a legitimate, inclusive and democratic election process. The immediate and unconditional release of political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi, are a key component of this process.

-- Second, the Burmese Government has missed an opportunity to demonstrate that it is willing to engage in a serious fashion with the United Nations and the wider international community. Burma's rebuff of the Secretary-General on important issues during his visit further constrains the ability of the international community to work with Burma.

-- As the Secretary-General pointed out, the Burmese Government maintains that cooperation with the United Nations is a cornerstone of the country's foreign policy; now is the time for Burma to match its words with deeds. We call on Burma's generals to seize the opportunity in front of them and to engage credibly with the United Nations and the world at large, and to stop isolating itself from the good will of other nations.

-- The Secretary-General has called for immediate action on the part of the Burmese government in order to avoid "wasted lives, lost opportunities, and prolonged isolation." We could not agree more. When Burma demonstrates its willingness to implement its international obligations, engage constructively with the international community on its core concerns, and commit to genuine progress towards reform, the United States remains ready to respond.

-- The Secretary-General further noted that Burma cannot face its many challenges alone. We around this table are willing to help Burma and its people build a stable future for all its people. It is now up to Burma's generals and government to show that they are ready to reach out a hand to the international community and to do the same.

End talking points.
CLINTON